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Kä, *šä*—with a rather high *ä*—represent, naturally, a weakening of the strong forms *känt*, *šänt*. When followed by a *g* or a *k* in the next word, as in “go,” “come,” “can’t,” “shan’t,” have not a nasalized vowel, but are commonly pronounced *käŋ*, *šäŋ*, with assimilation of *n* to *ŋ*.

For the sake of comparison, it may be worth while to call attention to the fact that nasalized vowels occur also in German. Viëtor² speaks of their existence in the dialects of Middle and South Germany; and Jespersen³ cites Viëtor’s note as a possible explanation of Goethe’s rime:

Es war einmal ein König,
Der hatt’ einen grossen *Floh*:
Den liebt’ er gar nicht wenig
Als wie seinen eignen *Sohn*.

WILLIAM A. READ.

Louisiana State University.

THE SOURCES OF *Volpone*.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—With reference to Mr. Holt’s communication in the February number of your journal, three considerations present themselves:

1. It will be observed that while the Rev. Thomas Francklin was probably the first to point to Lucian as the author from whom Jonson borrowed, his note refers only to *Dialogues* III (in the usual order, no. v); whereas Mr. Adams shows conclusively that the material for *Volpone* was taken from not fewer than six *Dialogues* (nos. v–ix, xi). The quotation from Davies is not especially important, since he does not seem to have been aware of the significance of his own remark; he uses the dialogue between Pluto and Mercury (no. v) merely to illustrate a general truth. No one in the nineteenth century appears to have brought up Lucian in connection with *Volpone*.

2. In justice to Mr. Adams, it should be stated that he was perfectly well aware of Francklin’s note and had appended it to his article in the form of a note. The note was mislaid in the office of *Modern Philology*, and the article was printed

before Mr. Adams could possibly return his corrected proof; in consequence the note did not appear in print. In letters dated November 9 and 19, 1904, the editors tendered a courteous explanation of and apology for the omission.

3. In reply to Mr. Holt’s communication to *Modern Philology* (October 21) supplying the note from Francklin, both the editors and Mr. Adams informed Mr. Holt that the omission was due to a printer’s error; and on December 10 he acknowledged the receipt of their letters. Mr. Holt’s failure, in a letter to *Mod. Lang. Notes*, published nearly two months later, to give Mr. Adams due credit for knowing of Francklin’s remark, is regrettable.

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ON THE WEARING OF HIDES BY THE DEVILS OF THE MEDIEVAL STAGE.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—In Rabelais’s *Pantagruel* (IV, 13) occurs a description which should have been quoted or cited in the thirteenth footnote to my second article on exorcism with a stole (See *Mod. Lang. Notes*, for April, 1905). This description can hardly be offered as evidence that the devils in French drama had from their earliest appearance on the stage worn the hides of various beasts, but scores of manuscripts to be seen at the Bibliothèque Nationale and other great European libraries are adorned with miniatures which prove that medieval folk almost invariably thought of the “enemy” and his imps as creatures nearly or quite human in form and bearing, yet hybrids of man and beast because they had hides instead of human skin.

The passage in Rabelais tells how Villon (not the real Villon, but the Villon of some legend pleasing to Rabelais) “fit la monstre de la Diablerie parmy la ville et le marché. Ses diables estoient tous capparassonnés de peaulx de loups, de veaulx et de beliers, passementées de testes de mouton, de cornes de boeufz, et de grands havetz de cuisine; ceinctz de grosses courraies, esquelles pendoient grosses cymbales de vaches, et sonnettes de muletz à bruit horrifique, etc.”

RICHARD HOLBROOK.

Columbia University.

² *Elemente der Phonetik*, p. 154.

³ *Lehrbuch der Phonetik*, p. 55.